

# **Northamptonshire Learning and Skills Council Annual Plan 2006-07**

## **May 2006**

Of interest to National, Regional and  
Local Learning and Skills Colleagues

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## Our Vision

This is an exciting time for Northamptonshire. The county is at the front line of the government's growth agenda for Milton Keynes and the south midlands (MKSM) where significant expansion anticipated over the next few years in terms of jobs, housing and population. The LSC and its partners must ensure that we have a workforce equipped with the skills and knowledge to meet this challenge and that all sections of the community, including the vulnerable and the disadvantaged, have the opportunity to benefit from the resources we invest. We have already taken the initiative in developing an MKSM master plan and will work with the urban delivery vehicles, North Northants Together and West Northants Development Corporation, as well as Invest Northamptonshire and other key planning agencies to plan the best possible future for the county.

Our aim is for Northamptonshire to be ranked among the top 20 counties in the country and we feel the building blocks are already in place to achieve this. In the last year we have established an effective County Employer Engagement Group, overseen the development of a County 14-19 Strategic Forum, with groups operating in each local authority district, and fora leading on adult skills and on information, advice and guidance. With the success of Northampton College's application to be a Centre of Vocational Excellence for Logistics we now have CoVEs in each of the county's priority sectors, the others being construction, performance engineering and health & social care. Along side this we have worked with partners on the Local Area Agreement which brings real focus to our work with children and young people and for the economic development in the county.

All this means we are well placed to fully implement the LSC's national 'Agenda for Change'. The components of this are set out in detail under 'Our Priorities' below but within these we will seek to shift the focus of vocational training in the county to truly meet the employer needs of the future as they arise from the MKSM developments and also to ensure that the needs of the student take precedence over the needs of the institution. We will also seek to deliver an additional 3,500 Level 2 qualifications to boost the local skills profile. However, the biggest impact locally of 'Agenda for Change' will be the streamlining of local delivery teams and we will ensure that Northamptonshire has the right people in the right place to address local needs.

Some of our biggest challenges are: -

- Achieving the balance and mix of provision best suited to the county's future needs
- Continuing the reform of 14-19 provision to improve retention at age 16
- Reducing the numbers of young people in the NEET group (not in education, employment or training)
- Increasing the numbers of both young people and adults undertaking and achieving level 2 qualifications
- Working effectively with partners across the county to equip the population with the skills needed for sustained economic growth.

Already green shoots are emerging. We are supporting partners in the development of radical and innovative collaborative options for a single delivery point for future post-16 provision in Daventry, Moulton College has assumed overall co-ordination of construction provision in the county, and we have schools developing new provision in engineering and logistics and consulting with us on the design of a relevant 6th form curriculum.

A lot of good foundations have been laid in the last year and, while progress may not have been as rapid as we would have liked, there are a clear signs of a gathering momentum. This plan sets out our ambitions for 2006/07 and beyond. If we achieve them along with our targets for this year and future years we will meet the overall aim of making Northamptonshire a top 20 county.

Chris Ripper  
Chair

Richard Greenwood  
Executive Director

## Our Priorities

We have published our second Annual Statement of Priorities which will take us further forward in our aim of transformation. Our six priorities for 2006/07 are to:

1. Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities
2. Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults
3. Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change
4. Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help individuals into jobs
5. Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services
6. Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally.

## Our Regional Priorities for the East Midlands

The LSC's regional priorities for 2006-07 reflect a commitment to transform the leadership and direction of the learning and skills agenda within the East Midlands. They strengthen the capacity to work regionally and locally, providing a responsive, demand led environment for delivering skills, which places the learner at the centre of our planning and delivery.

To maximise the impact of this transformational change, the LSC will continue to be a key strategic partner within the region to deliver enhanced products and services to employers, individuals and communities. This will be co-ordinated through the employment, skills and productivity partnership (esp), within which the LSC is involved at all levels.

As lead partner for 3 priorities for action within the esp we will work with partners in the region to:

- increase participation rates of 14-19 year olds
- develop adult skills at all levels, providing pathways for progression for those employed and developing employability skills for those seeking entry to employment, and
- improve the infrastructure and responsiveness of skills supply and the coordination of provision

The LSC's regional imperatives demonstrate how we aim to maximise the benefits of working regionally to provide consistency and greater impact within the region, whilst ensuring local flexibility to respond to local need. This includes developing a regional capital strategy to ensure we purchase provision that is responsive to demand and meets our needs and priorities; working with partners to develop an adult universal offer for employers; implementing the regional skills brokerage service and developing regional vocational pathways framework for 14-19 entitlement.

<b>National Priority</b>	All 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities (links to priority 4 in the esp)
<b>Associated target for the region</b>	<b>Regional Imperatives</b>
78% of 16-18 year olds participating in education and training  67% of all 16-18 year olds gaining a level 2 qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substantially reduce the number of young people Not in Employment Education or Training ( and in Employment with No Training )</li> <li>• Develop vocational pathways against an East Midlands framework for 14-19 entitlement</li> <li>• Define and deliver a learner entitlement for all young people by working in collaboration with schools, training providers, further education colleges and our strategic partners.</li> </ul>
<b>National Priority</b>	Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults (links to priority 2 in the esp)
<b>Associated target for the region</b>	<b>Regional Imperatives</b>
20,000 Adults achieving a full level 2  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority sectors for the region are: <b>construction, health and social care, engineering and manufacturing</b></li> <li>• We will target 30% of our achievement of full Level 2s towards these 3 regional priority sectors together with those additional local priority sectors identified within the Local LSC</li> </ul> More Level 3 achievements in the priority sectors set out in the esp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Train to Gain programme supported by Local LSC capacity building from April 2006</li> <li>• Implement the regional brokerage service (skills brokerage) available across the region from 1/4/06 with focus on priority sectors and clients</li> <li>• Stimulate demand from employers for workforce skills and implement improved employer engagement strategies</li> <li>• Enhance specialist vocational provision in support of key regional and local sectors including a review of Centres of Vocational Excellence and the development of skills academies and specialist schools</li> </ul>

5,500 learners complete a framework from the WBL programme	
<b>National Priority</b>	Transforming the learning and skills sector through agenda for change (links to priority 6 in the esp)
<b>Associated target for the region</b>	<b>Regional Imperatives</b>
No contracting within poor areas of provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase provision that meets our needs and priorities through a robust development plan</li> <li>• Develop provision that is more responsive to demand</li> <li>• Enhance business excellence for all Providers of education and training</li> <li>• A Regional Capital Strategy that is priority led</li> </ul>
<b>National Priority</b>	Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into jobs and lifelong employability (links to priority 5 in the esp)
<b>Associated target for the region</b>	<b>Regional Imperatives</b>
21,500 Skills for Life qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with jobcentre plus to align our strategic approach and introduce an adult universal offer for employers</li> <li>• Strengthen the quality of the Skills for life provision that leads to progression into level 1 and level 2 and ensure it contributes to the skills for life target</li> <li>• Review and award contracts for Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS)</li> </ul>
<b>National Priority</b>	Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services
<b>Associated target for the region</b>	<b>Regional Imperatives</b>
Increase Apprenticeships to 330 in local government  Deliver 2,010 first full level 2 qualifications  Deliver 490 skills for life qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a workforce development plan for key components of the public service sector with priority given to               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ NHS plan for skills</li> <li>○ Care sector</li> <li>○ Childcare sector</li> </ul> </li> </ul> All plans agreed by June 2006 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a structure and pathway for employers, employees , stakeholders and supply               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create a regional network of specialist skills brokers for the public services sector</li> <li>○ Pilot a public service sector compact in Leicestershire LSC in 2006 for full roll out in 2007</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>National Priority</b>	Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally
<b>Associated target for the region</b>	<b>Regional Imperatives</b>
LSC restructuring implemented in the region successfully  New structure in place by June 2006  Effectiveness of partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide first class leadership to the sector through agenda for change</li> <li>• Enhance the skills of LSC staff through learning and development</li> <li>• Review business processes to improve efficiency and impact</li> <li>• Develop a Regional Board to champion and drive learning and skills in the East Midlands</li> </ul>

## Our Targets

### Under priority 1, for young people:

- Increase the proportion of 19 year-olds who achieve at least Level 2 by 3 percentage points between 2004 and 2006, and a further two percentage points between 2006 and 2008, and improve attainment at Level 3.

Nationally we need an additional 31,000 young people to gain a Level 2 in 2006/2007 compared to 2004/2005 and a further 22,000 in 2007/2008 compared to 2005/2006.

In Northamptonshire in 2004 64% of young people had achieved a level 2 qualification by age 19. The local target is to increase this to at least 67% by 2006 and 69% by 2008. This means that as a county we need 5620 first level 2's in 2006/07 and 6068 in 2007/2008.

In 2006/2007 we will deliver 1242 full level 2 qualifications through LSC funded FE and workbased provision for 16-18 year olds, an increase of 316 compared to 2003/2004 and 172 compared to 2004/05. Assuming the other targets are met, for 2007/2008 the target will be 1420 Level 2 achievements.

Achievements by strand need to be: - F.E. - 2006/07 1232 2007/8 1300, WBL – 2006/07 357 2007/8 408

### Under priority 2, for adults:

- Reduce by at least 40 per cent the number of adults in the workforce who lack an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualifications by 2010.

Nationally we need to deliver 350,000 full Level 2

Locally we plan to deliver 2395 full Level 2 qualifications (1502 in FE and 299 in WBL) in 2006/07 of which 40.5% (970) need to be first full Level 2s. This is double the number for 2003/04 (1061 for FE and WBL combined).

Additionally, under Train to Gain we need to deliver 645 full Level 2s of which 90% (580) will be first Level 2s.

- Improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010, with a milestone of 1.5 million in 2007.

Locally our target for the period 2004-07 is 7325 Skills for Life qualifications. We need 3359 learners to achieve a qualification in 2006/07. Additionally, under Train to Gain, we need to deliver 157 Skills for Life qualifications.

### Underpinning both priorities 1 and 2, for Apprenticeships:

- The LSC has agreed a new Performance Indicator for Apprenticeships. The aim is for 75 per cent more people to complete their apprenticeships in 2007/08, compared to 2002/03.

Nationally we aim to raise the number of completions to 70,000 in 2006/07 supporting the achievement of Level 2 and Level 3 qualification targets.

Locally we achieved a 41% completion rate in 2004/05 and plan to achieve a 50% completion rate for 05/06. We aim to raise the number of completions to 1148 in 2006/07. This represents a 55% full framework completion rate.

### We also work with key partners to contribute to the following targets:

- Increase the proportion of young people and adults achieving a Level 3 qualification.
- Reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training by two percentage points by 2010
- Increase participation in Higher Education towards 50 per cent of those aged 18 to 30 by 2010.

## Our Values

Our values set out for us the way we work.

- **Trust:** the LSC has to be world-class at partnership and so we believe trust must be at the heart of the LSC.
- **Expertise:** we demonstrate expertise and true leadership in every aspect of our work. We have complete understanding of the communities we serve and of what is needed by business in terms of current and future skills.
- **Ambition:** we are ambitious for ourselves, in the goals and objectives we set, but more importantly we are ambitious for the communities we serve, for employers and for individuals in education and training.
- **Urgency:** we want to bring drive and urgency to the learning and skills sector, to tackle long-standing issues swiftly and professionally and to be responsive and fast moving.

Together, our four values will ensure the LSC can provide leadership and direction at a time of great change.

Our plan sets out how we will deliver our national and regional priorities in a local context highlighting what actions will be critically important in local delivery and what our contribution to the national targets will be.

Local Council members considered drafts of this plan at their meetings on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2005, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and 24<sup>th</sup> February 2005 making comment and suggestion as appropriate. Regular updates on progress against targets will be given to council members at their monthly meetings. Through the Council Chair, members are reminded of their individual and collective obligations in promoting LSC plans and strategies to the community. There is continuing dialogue between the LSC and College Governors to take forward the Agenda for Change.



## A Context for Delivery

### 1. Northamptonshire - An Overview

Northamptonshire is predominantly rural in character with a variety of small and medium sized towns; 40% of the population live in rural areas. Much of the county may be described as highly affluent, with high levels of labour market participation and higher than average property prices. However, pockets of deprivation are evident particularly in Corby which has suffered significantly from industrial restructuring and relative isolation due to poor transport links. Pockets of deprivation can also be found in the county's other main towns. Northamptonshire has close functional relationships with the London, the South East, East of England and the West Midlands, with the M1 corridor running through the county and rapid train links to London from some of the area's towns. Its location makes it a key focus for logistics activity, as well as a residence for many professionals, particularly those with higher skills, working in London and the South East. The majority of the county falls within the Milton Keynes South Midlands (MKSM) Growth Area.

Northamptonshire had an estimated population of 646,800 in 2004, which is 15.1% of the regional total. It has experienced strong population growth over the last decade, growing by 9% from 1994, which considerably exceeds the regional average. This growth is expected to increase considerably over the next few years as a result of the MKSM development which will affect six key locations in the county. The current expectation is for 80,000 new houses to be built and 70,000 new jobs created in the county by 2021<sup>1</sup>.

The minority ethnic population is 4.9% compared to the East Midlands and England (6.4% and 9.0% respectively)<sup>2</sup>. There are wide variations with some Local Authority Wards having less than 1% minority ethnic population while Castle ward in Wellingborough has over 30%.

Overall, Northamptonshire has very high employment and economic activity rates: both of which are in excess of 80% of the working age population. Unemployment rates are 1 percentage point below the regional average and almost 2 percentage points below the UK average. It is therefore reasonable to say that much of the county is at full employment. However, local variations are considerable. Employment rates in South Northamptonshire exceed those in Corby by over 5 percentage points. Earnings for both those resident and those working in the county are above the regional average. Residence based earnings are almost £3,000 higher per year than workplace based earnings, which is unsurprising given the close commuting distances to London, the South East and East of England. Again this overall picture of relative affluence masks pockets of far lower earnings: the mean annual earnings for residents of Corby are £18,249, compared to the county average of £23,171<sup>3</sup>.

The main employment sectors are Financial & Business Services and Wholesale Retail & Distribution, which are 19% and 18% of the workforce respectively. Manufacturing (excluding engineering) accounts for 12%, Public Services 10% and Health & Social Work 9%<sup>4</sup>. Logistics, which is split between Wholesale Retail & Distribution and Transport & Telecommunications which accounts for 8% of the workforce, has grown by 46% since 1998. Construction, currently around 7%, has grown more slowly but building as a result of MKSM alone is estimated at £1.7 billion in the next 15 years<sup>5</sup>.

For its size, Northamptonshire has a significant share of the region's business population, at 17.2% of the East Midlands VAT business stock at the end of 2004. It has a particularly high business

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<sup>1</sup> Learning and Skills in the MKSM sub-region, Experian 2005

<sup>2</sup> 2001 Census

<sup>3</sup> East Midlands Regional Economic Strategy

<sup>4</sup> Working Futures 2005

<sup>5</sup> Experian 2005

registration rate, at 44.2 per VAT registrations per 10,000 population head in 2004. This is almost 10 registrations per 10,000 population head higher than the regional average.

## **2. Young People**

Low unemployment and the low skill nature of the economy impact detrimentally on post-16 progression. It is relatively easy for young people to find employment and in some districts there is a culture of low aspiration in which those reaching age 16 are expected to become wage earners. As a result, they tend to end up in low skilled or agency work with no training opportunities.

Between 2003/04 and 2004/05 Northamptonshire achieved 11.8% growth in 16-18 FE participation; the highest in the region. Progression to post 16 education/training is 82.8%, nearly 4% higher than 2003; 75.2% went to sixth forms or FE with 7.6% involved in some form of employment with training or life skills. The number continuing in full time education is now nearly 12% higher than in 2001/02. However, 25% of 18 year olds are currently in employment with no training and participation in HE is only 28%; 68% of those going on to HE are female<sup>6</sup>.

The NEET group is currently 9.8% of the cohort<sup>7</sup>, 2.4% (around 300 young people) higher than a year ago which is on a par with the rest of the region. There is a high drop-out rate between years 12 and 13. Connexions report that there has been a drop in employment especially without training, and a significant drop in vacancies, some 60%, notified to them over the last year. Failure to address this will exacerbate the NEET group situation. The county 14-19 Strategy Group, the driver for the young people's agenda, has highlighted post-16 progression, the need for a better co-ordinated approach among 14-19 delivery partners county-wide and a broader, more inclusive curriculum as priority actions. There is a lack of work-based learning activity in some districts and differing levels of cross-district collaboration in terms of learning provision. Joint working between schools and colleges needs further development and support and must better engage WBL providers. The profile of vocational skills as an alternative option needs raising to allow young people to make better informed choices. ESF funding is supporting the reduction of the NEET group via research into the needs of young people who have dropped out of learning, pre E2E provision and workplace taster programmes.

In 2004 the number of students achieving 5 GCSE passes at A\* to C was 50.1% against a national figure of 53.7%. In 2005 this figure rose to 52.0% but the national figure rose to 57.1% so despite the improvement Northamptonshire actually slipped further behind. A level performance in 2005 (average points score per entry) has improved overall from 72.3 to 74.6 but is still below the national average of 79.9<sup>8</sup> up from 78.7 in 2004. To address this and drive improvement, the LA have appointed a consultant to undertake a review and stock take of 6<sup>th</sup> form standards and performance, which is expected to have a significant impact during 2006/07. The target for Apprenticeship Completion rates has been exceeded with 42% of apprentices completing the framework.

We will work with learning providers to maximise retention and achievement of all young people but with a particular focus on the 16-18 cohort that will contribute to the level 2 at 19 targets for 2006 and 2008. National data sets for 2005 confirm that Northamptonshire's level 2 at 19 achievement has increased from 64% in 2004 to 65%.

Local Authority projections for 2006 to 2010 suggest a flattening out of the 11-15 cohort which will feed into the 16-18 cohort during this period. There is only expected to be a 3% increase in 16+ between 2006 and 2008 and virtually no growth between 2009 and 2013. This will clearly impact on FE and WBL learner numbers but currently these projections take no account of any increase arising from the early impact of the MKSM developments.

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<sup>6</sup> Northamptonshire Connexions Destination Survey 2004

<sup>7</sup> October 2005

<sup>8</sup> DfES 2005

### 3. Skills

The Northamptonshire Partnership, Northamptonshire's Sub-Regional Strategic Partnership, published its Sub-Regional Economic Strategy (SRES) in December 2004. Northamptonshire LLSC contributed to the development of this strategy and synergy between it and this plan will be highlighted as appropriate.

The strategy identifies the need for a considerable improvement in employer engagement in training and learning at all levels and also the need to raise skill levels in the workforce in order to attract higher level jobs to the county as part of the MKSM expansion.

Increased engagement of adults in learning has, because of government policy, tended to focus more on widening participation. The subsequent shift towards qualification bearing provision in priority sectors means that the focus will now be on level 2 & 3. However, this tends to involve longer and more expensive courses, which will impact on volume.

Because of the buoyant, low skill economy, the workforce contains a high proportion of adults without a level 2 qualification. Qualification levels amongst the working age population show Northamptonshire to be slightly ahead of the region in terms of level 4 (+0.4%) and level 2 (+1.8%) and slightly behind at level 3 (-0.5%). However, we are behind the national figure for all three. Currently, 34.1 % the working age population (135,000) lack a level 2 qualification<sup>9</sup>. Engaging these people in learning is major challenge and underlines the importance of a targeted employer engagement strategy. We are currently undertaking a £250k programme of capacity building with providers to enable them to better meet the needs of employers. Northamptonshire is the only county in the region with employers represented on its County Employer Engagement Group (CEEG). Currently there are 9 representing all sizes of organisation as well as each of the national, regional and local priority sectors. This strong representation, together with an equally imposing presence on the local council, will provide an excellent springboard for further employer engagement and the development of Train to Gain. We will work with our new Train to Gain brokers to ensure colleges give the programme priority, utilise funding accordingly and develop more flexible delivery on employer premises. We must ensure that both young people and adults are employable and that employers have the calibre of people that they need.

#### 3.1 Priority Sectors

We already have Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) in Construction, Motorsport & Performance Engineering and Childcare, so addressing the three top priority sectors for the region. A proposal for a CoVE in Logistics, our local priority sector, was approved in November 2005 and will begin in earnest in April 2006.

##### **Construction**

Regionally the issues are: -

- **Qualifying the existing workforce**

The Industry aims to have a fully qualified workforce by 2010 and the LSC is committed to supporting this by ensuring regional and local rollout of OSAT (On Site Assessment and Training) which aims to assess workers for NVQs based on their experience and ability to do the job.

- **Increasing the number of qualified (to level 2) new young entrants**

6,500 new recruits are required annually in the region to replace the existing workforce. The sector will have to look to non traditional groups such as women and ethnic minorities to meet the balance. There is a need to increase Apprenticeship completion rates (16-18 L2 = 20% for region)

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<sup>9</sup> English Labour Force Survey 2005

- **Improving understanding of career opportunities in construction**

For construction to recruit and retain the brightest of today's young people work is needed with 5-19 year olds, schools, colleges and careers guidance advisors using partners in EBLO, 14-19 groups and Connexions.

- **Shaping up the industry's business performance**

There is a need to develop the leadership and management skills required to manage and work within integrated supply chains. The sector must focus on providing the skills to deliver the reform agenda. Suitable provision should exist and be built into the NETP Brokerage model.

Locally, the **Construction CoVE**, run by Moulton College, has expanded across the county with a centre at Silverstone in the south, where provision includes all female plumbing and brick laying courses and planned new facilities at Higham Ferrers in the east, due to open in September 2006, and Daventry in the west. Locally, job replacement in the construction sector to 2014 is estimated at 6,000, around 25% of the workforce<sup>10</sup>. However, the Milton Keynes & South Midlands study will impact significantly on the construction industry in the next few years and it is likely that this figure will grow considerably. There are capacity issues for construction delivery with even the CoVE struggling to meet demand. Plans to increase capacity are being developed but this remains a risk to the sector within the county.

### **Engineering**

Regionally the issues are: -

- **Productivity and competitiveness (with a focus on BIT)**

Occupational competence is insufficient to compete globally in the sector. Training in "Lean" "Six Sigma" and other types of business improvement techniques, new product and process development and implementation, supply chain management and project management is essential. There needs to be a significant increase in delivering BIT NVQs and VRQs in line with the Sector Skills Agreement.

- **Management and leadership**

There is evidence that links visionary leadership and competent management skills with increased productivity and profitability. The majority of this type of L&M training is generic and there is a growing demand from the sector for more bespoke industry specific programmes with a focus on the Lean manufacturing agenda.

- **Technical Workforce Development**

There is a need to up skill across the board from skilled operators at level 2 craft and technician at level 3 and technician at level 4. Multi skilled craftspeople, able to absorb training for new technologies and business processes are required. Engineering CoVEs have a vital role in delivering full framework apprenticeships to level 3 and ensuring progression routes to higher qualifications exist.

Locally, the Motorsport & Performance **Engineering CoVE** lead by Tresham Institute will have a key role in delivering quality and developing good practice for the engineering sector. The CoVE is a partnership between Tresham Institute and two colleges in the Milton Keynes, Oxon & Bucks region. In addition to the main college sites there is provision at Silverstone and adjacent to Rockingham Speedway at Corby. Tresham have also opened a general engineering facility at their Wellingborough Campus in order to better meet employer demand. The engineering sector generally faces the problem of an ageing workforce, a declining number of recruits and the need to increase the skill levels of those employed to cope with new working methods. The local job replacement figure to 2014 is put at 2,000<sup>11</sup>.

### **Health & Social Care**

Regionally the issues are: -

- **Key Skills issues**

<sup>10</sup> Working Futures 2005

<sup>11</sup> Working Futures 2005

In Health, major skills gaps and shortages exist in customer care and communication and ICT is another important area as teaching techniques have not kept pace with changes in technology.

In Social Care the Regional workforce is significantly less well qualified, only 47% hold a level 3 qualification compared with 58% for the UK. There are also higher proportions with literacy and numeracy problems.

- **Qualifying the existing workforce**

In Health there are issues around achieving the medical workforce targets and introducing changes in medical training and ensuring compliance with the European Working Time Directive.

In Social Care there is a need to address the limited involvement in Apprenticeships (only 12% of regional employers was engaged in a 2005 survey) By April 2008 there is a requirement for 50% of personal care to be delivered by workers who are NVQ qualified.

- **Recruiting new entrants**

There are recruitment and retention problems in relation to some types of social care staff. (e.g. field social workers and care home employees for older people.) Lack of suitable applicants, poor image of the sector and poor human resource management/inadequate recruitment system are chiefly to blame. Employer priorities in addressing skills gaps are likely to focus on meeting qualification targets and deadlines for national minimum standards in care homes and domiciliary care.

Locally provision needs developing. It accounts for around 9% of the Northamptonshire workforce and currently there is quality but not quantity. In child care, regional research suggests greater innovation and flexibility of delivery is required to reach potential learners in rural locations, and that providers need to plan alongside local EYDCPs. Our CoVE in Childcare and Early Years Development, based at Northampton College, is already a significant player in this. With 13,000 job replacements needed by 2014<sup>12</sup> without accounting for the MKSM growth, there is clearly a need for targeted action.

### **Logistics**

Regionally the issues are: -

- **LGV Driver Shortage**

83% of FTA members experienced difficulty in recruiting and retaining LGV drivers. The age limit for licence (21) hinders recruitment although the Young Drivers Scheme has been successful in helping employers recruit trainees from the 16-21 age group and equip them with a category C licence. Insurance costs are high for under 25s. Training infrastructure must accommodate Compulsory Driver training (EU Directive 2007)

- **Leadership & management**

Productivity in the sector has been achieved mostly through cost cutting or more flexible work practices. Better management training is the key to dealing with the lower level skills issues. Most training is currently generic in nature and there is a need for more bespoke provision. Current provision e.g. the CILT Certificate/Diploma needs to be marketed through in house or distance learning options and built into the offer from Train to Gain skills brokers.

- **Essential Skills**

NESS Survey (2003) showed skills gaps across all Logistics occupations such as Literacy (26%), Numeracy (22%) and 56% with communication skills issues. Literacy/Numeracy screening and national tests need to be a precursor to enrolment on to NVQ programmes or to be embedded within vocational courses.

Locally, although still small in overall percentage terms, **logistics** is a rapidly expanding sector and one in which Workforce Development has traditionally been a low priority. Three quarters of the workforce is qualified below level 2, over half of companies have no training plan or training

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<sup>12</sup> Working Futures 2005

budget, and over 20% of the existing workforce has skills needs in relation to their job.<sup>13</sup> The combined Wholesale Retail & Distribution and Transport & Telecommunications sector has a replacement job need of 35,000 in the period to 2014<sup>14</sup>. Northampton College's new logistics CoVE will address this when it begins operation in earnest in April 2006.

Although CoVEs and priority sectors are core to the achievement of our aims we must not lose sight of other mainstream providers and employment sectors. For example, in addition to the Construction CoVE, Moulton College is a specialist land based college delivering skills which are needed both locally and nationally.

It will be a challenge to ensure that sufficient revenue funding is available and prioritised to meet the demand for learning in our priority sectors. These sectors tend to attract higher funding rates per learner and involve longer, more expensive qualification-based learning.

### **3.2 Skills for Life**

Over the last twelve months, the local position in relation to national targets has improved. Current performance suggests that we are on course to achieve the 2004-07 target. This improvement has been brought about by focusing provision on target bearing qualifications, better recording and coding, quality development support for provider organisations and a year on year increase in full apprenticeship completions within WBL. However, the proportion of non target bearing qualifications being offered needs to be addressed. In addition, we need to ensure that provision is clearly focussed on areas of need and that provision is made available in the right place at the right time. Given the high level of employment in the county, many of the potential clients are in work, meaning more targeting of delivery in employer premises is required. The need for ESOL provision appears to be growing with a new demand from Eastern European and other groups in the county. Analysis of demand is needed with appropriate provision developed, subject to resources.

Several successful examples of 'embedded basic skills' have been piloted with existing workforces in the County, which provide a model for future delivery. ESF is supporting capacity building of the Essential Skills and ESOL Tutor infrastructure to ensure we have sufficient qualified tutors to meet demand and also funds NVQ delivery at levels 2 and 3, ESOL and Essential Skills learning for those aged 16 plus in employment.

The LSC is preparing for the implementation of the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) from August 2006. A tendering exercise has taken place to identify a lead provider. In Northamptonshire the following are in scope for OLASS:

HMP & YOI Onley  
HMP Wellingborough  
NPS Northamptonshire

The OLASS vision sees offenders having access to learning and skills which enable them to gain the skills and qualifications they need to hold down a job and have a positive role in society. Probation Service figures (2004) show 678 prisoners released on licence in Northamptonshire.

A strong working relationship with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), H M Prison Service, National Probation Service and the Youth Justice Board has been formed through the Regional OLASS Board. The LSC leads on the Education, Training and Employment Pathway of the Regional Reducing Re-offending Action Plan.

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<sup>13</sup> DTZ Pleda 2004

<sup>14</sup> Working Futures 2005

## 4. The Learning Infrastructure

A local Capital Plan has been developed which:

- identifies local priorities for capital investment in the context of StAR, Joint Area Review and other reviews;
- assesses the scale and quality of the existing FE and 16-19 estate;
- provides a basis for consultation with local LSC's key stakeholders and other partners such as education and training providers, local authorities, urban regeneration companies;
- enables the local LSC to prioritise capital investment proposals;
- is predicated on a 3-year rolling basis updated annually.

The merger of Northampton College and Daventry Tertiary College was a significant step in re-energising learning delivery. We now need to focus on changing the mix and balance of actual provision to better meet the county's needs. However, in doing this we need to ensure that the sector remains financially stable. We will therefore be undertaking ongoing reviews of our colleges financial health.

Our combined overall FE success rate in 2003/04 was 69%, compared to a National Benchmark of 72% and 73% for the East Midlands. However, the county provision mix includes significant participation in construction, a priority sector where success rates are generally lower. Other factors contributing to low success have been addressed by merging Daventry Tertiary College and Northampton College and by redirecting 19+ FE resources from the County Council's ACL provision to the FE colleges. An Adult Skills strategic forum has been launched and will produce a blueprint for adult learning in the county.

Currently, all bar one of our existing FE and WBL have been assessed at or above 'adequate' by ALI/OFSTED but there are a few specific providers where provision and/or facilities are giving cause for concern. We have deployed 'Support for Success' consultancy and discretionary funding from the 2005/06 allocation to address these issues. With a 22% reduction in local discretionary funding for 2006/07 we anticipate fewer but better targeted interventions. A series of case conferences are being held with providers throughout January 2006 and these will identify any other risks we need to consider.

There has also been a major review of 'other provision' in FE during 2004/05. The result has been a more targeted delivery of Skills for Life qualifications by both Further Education and Adult & Community Learning providers and a reduction in outcomes that don't contribute to national targets. In 2005/06 Northamptonshire received 34% of FE funding for adult learning, compared to a regional average of 42%. At the same time, our growth in 16-18 FE participation since 2002/03 has been the highest in the East Midlands. These two factors have created additional pressures in the County. It can be anticipated that difficult and potentially sensitive decisions about funding priorities will need to be made. Our commitment is to achieve such changes through open dialogue and communications with providers.

We have been working with the FE colleges to develop closer collaboration and agree steps towards an overarching FE strategy for the County. This includes joint planning and/or delivery of provision, and closer collaboration in developing and implementing 14-19 strategy. This approach will also take forward our work on sector priorities. During 2005/06 we have agreed that each FE College leading a CoVE in a priority sector, will chair a group to develop a County strategy for provision.

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) in Northamptonshire has a history of poor performance: the county being one of the worst performing in the country. Whilst there has been some improvement since the introduction of a new core contract provider (Nextstep) we are still underachieving. Only 241 of the profiled 700 sub level advice sessions were achieved in the first quarter of 05/06. There is a need to develop the ownership and involvement of major partners in IAG to ensure that there is a properly supported IAG infrastructure in the county.

The overarching recommendation of the 2005 Strategic Review of the LSC's planning and funding of provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities is that the "LSC should develop a national strategy for the regional/local delivery, through collaboration with partners, of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across the post 16 learning and skills sector that is high quality, learner centred and cost effective". The Northamptonshire Strategic Area Review found that there is no County strategy for the delivery of support to learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and little collaboration between those responsible for it. It is imperative that local collaboration focuses on joint planning and funding approaches if the needs of these learners are to be addressed. An internal equality and inclusion group has been established and is supported by a local action plan.

We have implemented a new Equality and Diversity internal working group to oversee and direct developments locally and ensure that priority is given to all vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. We will also work with partner organisations through the new county Adult Strategic forum, 14 to 19 strategy group and NEET action forum to ensure that provision meets the local need of these learners and to ensure that they are not disadvantaged (see Our Delivery Resources page 26).

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) are a new initiative, currently being piloted to improve effectiveness between central government, local authorities and their public service delivery partners. They will have an increasing impact on the LSC's business. Northamptonshire is one of 21 pilot areas The LSC is working on the LAA 'activity blocks' for young people and economic development. Where the LSC has a lead role, we will be looking to the LAA partnership to add value and for the partner organisations to make active contributions.



## Skills Matrix

Northamptonshire LSC

FO4 2004/2005

Under 19	High		Medium		Low		Total	
	£	%	£	%	£	%	£	%
Provision contributes to National Target	£4,153,024	22%	£5,635,781	30%	£1,060,648	6%	£10,849,453	57%
Provision could contribute to National Target	£818,699	4%	£824,088	4%	£765,588	4%	£2,408,375	13%
Provision does not contribute to National Target	£3,154,762	17%	£1,655,472	9%	£910,508	5%	£5,720,742	30%
<b>Totals</b>	£ 8,126,485	43%	£ 8,115,341	43%	£ 2,736,744	14%	£18,978,570	100%

Over 19	High		Medium		Low		Total	
	£	%	£	%	£	%	£	%
Provision contributes to National Target	£2,858,513	18%	£1,023,353	7%	£945,298	6%	£4,827,164	31%
Provision could contribute to National Target	£173,670	1%	£107,898	1%	£75,134	0%	£356,702	2%
Provision does not contribute to National Target	£6,615,594	42%	£3,128,406	20%	£800,346	5%	£10,544,346	67%
<b>Totals</b>	£ 9,647,777	61%	£ 4,259,657	27%	£ 1,820,778	12%	£15,728,212	100%

NB This will be updated with the FO5 cut in January when the tool box reports are updated.

The matrix shows that In 2004/05 57% of FE provision for 16-18 year olds was contributing towards national targets with 13% potentially contributing. This compares with regional figures of 49% and 18% respectively.

In 2004/05 31% of FE provision for adults was contributing towards national targets with a further 2% potentially contributing. Although very low, this compares with regional figures of 25% and 2% respectively. (September FO4) see 'Skills Matrix'.

Although Northamptonshire performs better than the region in terms of the % of provision that contributes to high priority areas of activity, there is still a very significant proportion of provision in general and high priority provision in particular which makes no contribution to our targets.

The main focus in 2006/07 will be a continuous dialogue with FE partners aimed at re-aligning the high priority, non-contributory activity into high priority, contributing activity. The potential impact of this is an additional 17% of 16-18 funding and 42% of adult funding being targeted more constructively than at present. This dialogue will be at an operational level and also part of discussions at Council/Governor level.

Within WBL there will be greater emphasis on the priority sectors with increases of 15% in construction provision and 10% in engineering. There is also a small increase in Health & Social Care and we will seek to improve this further during the contracting round.

## The Key Changes Needed

Significant changes will need to be made to the balance and mix of provision to meet local targets and priorities. The key changes needed are: -

### Priority 1: Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities

- Increase the number of young people undertaking and achieving full L2 qualifications from 5183 to 5620 (with 1<sup>st</sup> L2s increasing from 550 to 632). This challenging target will require a substantial increase in funding
- Increase 16-18 participation to 78% by developing a broader range of options and addressing post-16 transport problems which remain a significant issue.

### Priority 2: Making learning truly demand led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults

- Increase the number of adults undertaking and achieving full L2 qualifications to 2395 and move the provision mix to increase the number of adults undertaking qualifications in priority sectors. As the target is double the current level of achievement, this will require a significant redirection of funding and innovative learning delivery and assessment methods
- Move the mix of provision in both FE and WBL further towards priority sectors to ensure learners are skilled to meet employer needs:

Sector	WBL 04/05	WBL 05/06	WBL 06/07	FE 04/05	FE 05/06	FE 06/07
Construction	638	736		1535	1624	
Engineering	476	523		1391	1683	
Health & Social Care	475	480		4532	3944	

**N.B.** No figures are available for logistics due to changes in the 'area of learning' they are recorded under.

- Drive through reform of the FE and WBL sectors to deliver Train to Gain in priority sectors and ensure increased capacity, improved employer responsiveness and flexibility of delivery
- Work with providers to develop increased pre Level 2 provision and an increase in progression through to L3 which will subsequently result in a contribution to all other targets
- Increase FE fee income by 10% between 2005/06 and 2006/07 as a stepping stone to achieving the national target of 37.5% by 2007/08 and up to 50% longer term
- Implement changes to the delivery mix of safeguarded provision in Adult and Community Learning to ensure a coherent approach and stable provider base

### Priority 3: Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change

- Influence the regional alignment of planning and resources ensuring that new capital developments in Northants are given priority due to the significant expected growth of the MKSM development
- Improve the capability and performance of providers by implementing actions to address the outcomes of the WBL/e2e review resulting in increased capacity in priority areas, improved success rates and a better contribution to targets

### Priority 4: Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into jobs

- Accelerate the move in skills for life provision towards an 80/20 split of target and non-target bearing courses, redirecting funding accordingly ensuring capacity building particularly in ESOL

# What we have delivered so far and our planned changes for 2006/07 (sheet 1 of 2) as at 31/05/06

SUMMARY OF YOUNG PEOPLE (16-18)	2004/05				Funding £
	Learners				
	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)	Success Rates		
FE Total Learners	7256				£22,955,924
of which...					
Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications	2095	1238	59.1%		
Learners on a full Level 2 qualification	1575	831	52.8%		
Learners on a full Level 3 qualification	2327	796	34.2%		
Learners on 2 or more A2 qualis	287	232			
Discrete* activity, e.g. fully ESF, or LIDF funded provision	100	0			
School sixth form	6125				£26,329,326
Work Based Learning	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement /12 month AiL		Funding £
WBL Total Learners	1819				£6,048,427
of which...					
Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications	Included in summary of Adults (19+)				
Learners on an Apprenticeship	1491	422	28.3%		
Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship	293	62	21.2%		
Entry to Employment	Learners			Funding £	
	Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)		Pos've destinations
All E2E	508	633	22.0	282	£2,778,565

2005/06				
Learners				
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)	Success Rates		Funding £
7683				£26,561,822
2113	1169	55.3%		
1796	1059	59.0%		
2504	838	33.5%		
289	235			
745	57	44 @ L2 13 @ L3		
6133				£28,265,780
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL		Funding £
1995				£5,861,880
Included in summary of Adults (19+)				
1667	684	41.0%		
325	74	22.8%		
Learners				Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destination s	
688	572	19.1	344	£2,585,456

2006/07				
Learners				
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)	Success Rates		Funding £
8084				£29,203,401
2351	1553	66.1%		
2034	1232	60.6%		
2697	936	34.7%		
292	238			
406	42	39 @ L2 3 @ L3		
6190				£28,872,776
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL		Funding £
2220				£6,573,816
Included in summary of Adults (19+)				
1830	702	38.4%		
391	137	35.0%		
Learners				Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destination s	
783	615	18.2	399	£2,338,492

Green header indicates underpinning data is complete

Red header indicates underpinning data is incomplete

# What we have delivered so far and our planned changes for 2006/07 (sheet 2 of 2) as at 31/05/06

SUMMARY OF ADULTS (19+)	2004/05			
	Volumes of learners	Learners In-year achievement s (volume)	Success Rates	Funding £
<b>FE Total Learners</b>	25749			£16,445,993
<i>of which...</i>				
Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications	1934	1590	82.2%	
Learners on a full Level 2 qualification	2269	1049	46.2%	
Learners on a full Level 3 qualification	1363	586	43.0%	
Learners on 2 or more A2 quali	46	88		
Discrete* activity, eg fully ESF, or LIDF funded provision	1652	4	4 @ S4L	
<b>Adult &amp; Community Learning</b>	14248			£2,195.060
<b>Work Based Learning</b>	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievement s (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL	Funding £
<b>WBL Total Learners</b>	1148			£2,499,684
<i>of which...</i>				
Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications	2065	848	41.1%	
Learners on an Apprenticeship	694	222	32.0%	
Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship	454	124	27.3%	
<b>ETP / NETP</b>	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		Funding £
	1160	648		0

2005/06			
Volumes of learners	Learners In-year achievements (volume)	Success Rates	Funding £
21341			£14,239,771
2428	1541	63.5%	
2325	1168	50.2%	
1594	731	45.9%	
35	28		
5467	796	321 @ L2 95 @ L3 380 @ S4L	
9918			
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL	Funding £
1250			£2,535,832
2640	1184	44.8%	
721	321	44.5%	
445	170	38.2%	
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		Funding £
1371	912		0

2006/07			
Volumes of learners	Learners In-year achievements (volume)	Success Rates	Funding £
16348			£11,934,999
2370	1806	76.2%	
2340	1502	64.2%	
1536	748	48.7%	
34	27		
2979	486	290 @ L2 21 @ @L3 175 @ S4L	
9730			
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL	Funding £
1598			£2,583,346
2558	1311	51.3%	
717	369	51.5%	
575	194	33.7%	
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		Funding £
2136	1355		0

Budgets	FE	WBL	E2E	SSF	ACL	ETP/NETP	Development Funding	Capital	Administration	Other Programme Budgets
<b>2004/05</b>	£42,115,000	£10,179,000	£2,994,903	£26,329,326	£2,195,060					
<b>2005/06</b>	£42,402,000	£10,147,938	£2,918,202	£28,265,780	£2,285,598					
<b>2006/07</b>	£44,882,540	£9,699,543	£2,571,552	£28,872,776	£2,144,541	£2,246,618				

## Key Actions

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
<p>1 Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities</p> <p>Lead: Carolyn Savage</p>	<p><b>Implement and monitor local LSC Level 2@ age 19 action plan in conjunction with Local Authority and providers with particular focus on low attaining districts e.g. Northampton.</b></p> <p><b>Agree new partnership arrangements with School Improvement Partners to raise 14 to 19 attainment and improve quality.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved retention and achievement levels for 2006 and target of 67% with Level 2 @ age 19 achieved for Northamptonshire.</li> <li>• Increase participation @ 16 to 18 for September 2006 to the regional target of 78%.</li> <li>• Within WBL and FE increase the number of full level 2 achievements from 306 to 357</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Agree seven district 14 to 19 plans with SMART objectives and increased vocational offer for September 2006 to develop local Learner Entitlement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District plans agreed by April 06.</li> <li>• Improved vocational offer and achievement and progression post 16 in September 2006.</li> <li>• New 14 to 19 prospectus developed for Dec 2006</li> <li>• Implement outcomes of Jan 2006 Joint Area Review</li> <li>• Implementation of a common application process system (CAP) by September 2007</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Work with Connexions and partners to ensure that disadvantaged groups and minority groups are targeted to reduce the numbers of young people in the NEET group.</b></p> <p><b>Utilise European Social Funds to increase engagement by offering pre E2E provision and workplace tasters for young people in the NEET</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of care leavers into positive post 16 progression by 5%</li> <li>• Increase the number of SEN young people into positive post 16 progression from 80% to 85%.</li> <li>• Overall reduction of NEET group from 7.2% to 5.9% by November 2006</li> </ul>

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of positive progressions from e2e from 45% to 49%</li> </ul>
	<p>Through district planning groups, develop new provision, infrastructure and collaborative arrangements for Corby, Daventry, E Northants and S Northants to increase 14 to 19 activities.</p> <p>Use European Social Funds to offer delivery of vocational training via mobile delivery &amp; vocational centres.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree short and long terms plans with costed options with each district by April 06.</li> <li>• Support proposals for 16 to 19 capital investment, running competitions where required.</li> <li>• Provide mobile delivery &amp; vocational centres in the agreed vocational areas by September 2006.</li> <li>• Mobile offer doubled to 6 delivery points by January 2007</li> <li>• Double to 6 the number of WBL providers involved in the provision by January 2007</li> </ul>
	Risk assess and agree provider improvement targets for FE, WBL and School Sixth form to improve retention and achievement and value added results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FE providers to achieve targets set in 3 year Development Plans for 06/07</li> <li>• WBL apprentice framework completion increased to 47% by July 2006</li> <li>• S6F average points score per student entry increased from 74.6 to 76 by July 2006</li> <li>• FE success rates to increase from 69% to <b>x %</b></li> </ul> <p><b>To be confirmed following discussions with colleges</b></p>

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
2 Making learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults  Lead: Andrew Cheal	Implement the actions from the Joint Area Review (JAR) to be carried out in January 2006.	Action plan agreed with partners by March 06 and monitored through the 14 to 19 strategy group
	To integrate the 14 to 19 strategy group within the CYPP arrangements and develop a Local Area Agreement for the Children's Block	LAA Plan agreed with partners by April 2006 and resources deployed to deliver
	Implement the capacity building plan in preparation for NETP (Train to Gain) locally and regionally.	By August 2006: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gateway FE arrangements operational</li> <li>Priority sector qualifications delivered to meet regional sector plans</li> <li>Local infrastructure in place and targets and contracts agreed</li> </ul>
	Launch 'Train to Gain locally' and agree employer engagement targets for priority sectors,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>520 employers engaged by July 2007</li> <li>1200 learners start on level 2 programmes</li> <li>330 learners start on SfL programmes</li> <li>5 skills brokers in operation</li> <li>FE sector staff recruited and trained to meet new requirements</li> </ul>
	Develop a conduit to allow the County Employer Engagement Group to feed into the regional NETP and increase the local influence,	Employer needs are fed into the ongoing development of the NETP at a local level
	Develop and implement a local plan for Personal and Community Learning and associated programmes and agree safeguard funding.	By March '07 to have delivered the following in terms of community, neighbourhood and family learning: -  X learners engaged on PCDL

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
		<p>X parents/carers engaged in WFL</p> <p>X learners start on FLLN</p> <p>X new learners engaged in NLDC</p> <p>Targets to be agreed following budget allocation being made</p>
	Improve the local provider infrastructure to better meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and respond to local and national recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New section 140 assessment process in place for SEN young people by May 06</li> <li>• Agree new pre level 2 arrangements in FE and WBL by June 2006.</li> <li>• Improve completion rates of Learner with Learning Difficulties/Additional Learning Needs to reflect at least, the completion rates of other learners.</li> </ul>
	Drive links in each district between school and FE specialisms to contribute to sector priority targets	Provider/employer collaboration to meet sector demands in and across districts. Each district to have links with at least 1 FE provider and 1 for each priority sector.
	Target a significant proportion of full Level 2 achievements in priority sectors, Construction, Health & Social Care, Engineering and Logistics	30% of full level 2s achieved to be from the priority sectors.
	Implement the local sector action plans for Construction, Engineering, Health & Social Care and Logistics and monitor progress via the regional and local Sector Priority Groups.	<p>By March 07 achieve the key targets (reflecting SSA stakeholder action points where appropriate).</p> <p>Utilise the Skills Matrix to evidence volume performance, full or part level 2/3s, fit for purpose qualifications and funding levels per local office</p>



Priority	Action	Measure of Success
		and individual provider
	Increase the number of young people progressing to L3 and above through partnership working with Aim Higher, our CoVE's and other partner organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in L3 attainment for young people and adults</li> <li>• Increase applications to UCAS</li> </ul>
3 Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change  Lead: Linda Bower	Agree and implement funding and delivery plans with the FE sector to move a greater % of low priority provision to medium/high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 year development plans and individual quality improvement indicators agreed by May 2006</li> <li>• Provision 'shift' percentages agreed leading to increase in target bearing activity particularly in SFL and adult Level 2 for September 2006.</li> <li>• Encourage providers to develop innovative delivery models and to showcase good practice</li> </ul>
	Challenge and withdraw from poor performance by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing the outcomes of the WBL and E2E review, and</li> <li>• Implementing the outcomes of the JAR/Quality/Inspection reviews</li> </ul>	Increase in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overall provider success</li> <li>• participation</li> <li>• retention and progression</li> </ul> Action planned JAR developments
	Develop a new capital strategy (Northants Master Plan) to align investment with skills priorities and future Milton Keynes and South midlands growth requirements	Implementation plan developed by May 06.

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
<p>4 Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into jobs</p> <p>Lead: Richard Greenwood</p>	<p>Through the new Adult Skills and IAG strategic forum work with partners to develop and oversee the implementation of a coherent local adult learning strategy.</p>	<p>Key developments agreed and an operations group established to deliver on behalf of the strategic board by end of April 2006.</p>
	<p>Through the adult skills and the IAG fora work with partners to develop a coherent approach to learning strategy.</p>	
	<p>Agree funding and targets with FE and WBL providers to increase Level 2 achievements.</p>	<p>Adult Level 2 target of 2395 full level 2 qualifications in 2006/07.</p>
	<p>Implement new arrangements for the LSC to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take over provision for Offender Learning, and</li> <li>• transfer SFL provision from Jobcentre plus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract in place by August 06</li> <li>• Provision transferred to LSC by Aug 2006</li> </ul>
	<p>Develop the county 'Top 20' plan with partners to ensure future achievement is aspirational and all partners are committed to ambitious targets and outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners to develop Performance Indicators to 2010 by June 2006</li> <li>• Agreed monitoring arrangements and milestones in place with LAA's where agreed to deliver new ways of working.</li> </ul>
	<p>Implement the outcomes of the SFL review provision in county with recommendations for contracting and delivery by April 2006</p>	<p>Increase target bearing provision from 48% towards the national target of 80%</p>

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
5 Improve the skills of the workers who are delivering public services  Lead: Stuart Parkes	European Social Funding SFL contracts deliver target bearing provision.	
	Contribute to the successful delivery of Local Area Agreements through alignment of LSC funded training	Implementation of Local area agreements
	Ensure broker capacity focuses on the skills needs of the local public sector	Deliver 53 Skills for Life qualifications, 323 Level 2' qualifications and engage with 34 employers in the first full year.
	Develop a joint funding approach with partners to maximise the opportunities for and impact of skills development in the sector especially in relation to higher level skills.	Local providers able to access Train to Gain funding.
	Prioritise this area with providers, so that they are more responsive to the needs of those delivering public services	At least 250 school support staff achieve level 2 or above vocational qualification
	Increase the number of apprentices in the public sector, challenging gender stereotyping where appropriate	Provide at least 20 additional places for nursing cadets by September 2006
	Ensure the Teacher Qualifications target is met via negotiations with individual institutions	Targets agreed as per 3 year Development Plans.
6 Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally  Lead: Richard Greenwood	LSC restructuring completed for Northamptonshire	New structure in place by 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2006
	Development of effective, new LLSC partnerships teams within the county	Partnership teams deliver LSC priority actions by March 2007
	Support providers and their staff through the Agenda for Change process ensuring they have	3 year Development Plans include actions to ensure staff have the right skills to meet the

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	the skills to meet the reforms.	reforms.

## Our Delivery Resources

### Equality and Diversity

The Learning and Skills council recognises its statutory duties under Race Equality legislation and emerging duties around Disability and Gender Equality. The local office will work in partnership with colleagues at Regional and National level to support the process of Equality Impact Assessments across all functional areas.

We will continue to confirm our commitment to equality by ensuring that our programmes will promote the inclusion of under represented groups to improve achievement and progression through learning. We have identified at local level areas of under representation and under achievement by different groups of learners.

The EDIMs are a key mechanism for supporting, monitoring and assessing the impact of our equality and diversity activities (see page 29). This framework will enable us work with providers to monitor and review progress regularly in order to improve participation and achievement of under represented groups particularly relating to gender, disability and/or learning difficulties and ethnicity. East Midlands LSCs have agreed regional headline EDIMs which contribute to the regional priorities and improve local level participation and achievement.

The headline measures agreed within the East Midlands region are;

- Improve the quality and collection of data
- Remove barriers to learning & widen participation for disadvantaged groups
- Improve skills for employability for disadvantaged groups
- Address gender imbalance in programmes and areas of learning, including non traditional occupations.

Locally, we remain committed to securing better inclusion, achievement and progression through learning for all under-represented groups. We have set up an internal Equality & Inclusion working party to oversee and direct developments and ensure that priority is given to all vulnerable or disadvantaged groups who wish to participate in education or training. All providers have been assigned specific equality and diversity impact measures, to ensure that their provisions remain inclusive.

We will focus on the following priorities:

- Improving learning opportunities for county based black and minority ethnic (BME) groups
- Ongoing development of LLSC Equality & Diversity Action Plan
- Working with partners at strategic levels to secure better outcomes for LLDD and BME learners
- Improving the quality of data received from the FE sector.
- Ensure that we continue to fulfil our duties under the Race Relations Amendment Act, DDA and other relevant equality legislations.

We will also continue to work with partner organisations through the new County Adult Strategic Forum, 14-19 Strategy Groups and NEET Action Forum, to ensure that provision meets the local need of these learners.

### Health and Safety

The health, safety and welfare of learners is a fundamental value of the Learning and Skills Council. All learners are entitled to learning that takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment.

We expect all those we fund to fully meet their legal obligations and will seek assurance that they have suitable and sufficient arrangements for learner health and safety. We will take appropriate actions when standards are not met.

We consider health and safety to be an integral part of quality. Those we fund are expected to have in place an effective health and safety management system and demonstrate continuous improvement.

We will promote, and expect those we fund, to promote the safe learner concept. We will develop, in partnership with others, a health and safety framework that can be used by everyone to help benchmark and measure performance.

## **Learners with Learning Difficulties and / or Disabilities**

We are committed to ensuring that all learners with learning difficulties and disabilities have equal access to LSC funded provision together with clear progression routes. The new County Adult Strategic forum and the existing 14 to 19 Strategy Group will oversee provision for these learners and will seek to ensure an increased choice of high quality post 16 appropriate learning opportunities

## **Sustainable Development**

The LSC believes that the learning and skills sector should contribute to sustainable development through the learning opportunities it delivers, the way it uses resource and the way it works with communities

In September 2005, The LSC published a strategy on sustainable development. 'From Here to Sustainability'. Our vision is that the learning and skills sector will proactively contribute to sustainable development through the management of resources, the learning opportunities it delivers and its engagement with communities. In particular, during the lifespan of this plan, the LSC, colleges and other learning providers will:

- Decide how best they can contribute to sustainable development through a structured programme of capacity building;
- Have done a baseline audit of current sustainable development activity and identified examples of good practice
- Agree on the guiding principles and approaches they will adopt
- Include criteria for strategic development in all guidance and reporting requirements
- Use their experience of implementing sustainable development to identify risks and opportunities
- Understand what improvement looks like for the sector and develop a reporting framework
- Agree longer term milestones for 2020 and beyond
- Launch pilot projects to develop good practice and contribute towards sustainable development in the sector

Sustainable development will continue to be a key element of the provider development process.

## **Partnership Working**

We are working strategically with a range of partners and partnership bodies including: -  
County 14-19 Strategic Partnership  
Adult Strategic Forum

IAG Strategic Forum  
Milton Keynes & South Midlands Planning for Growth Group  
North Northants Together (local delivery vehicle) which includes partnership working with the Corby Gateway  
West Northants Development Corporation (local delivery vehicle)  
Children & Young People's Partnership Board  
County Employer Engagement Group  
NEET Action Forum  
Northamptonshire Partnership  
Northamptonshire Training & Development Partnership  
FE Principals Group

In 2006 we are initiating a county Capital & Infrastructure Partnership as part of our local capital plan.

## **European Social Funding**

In addition to those activities referred to elsewhere which support the achievement of our targets, ESF is being used to deliver demand led provision not funded via mainstream activity.

ESF also supports the capacity building of Voluntary Sector organisations to deliver IAG services through the provision of Matrix accreditation so increasing the number of organisations able to subcontract to the core IAG provider, and facilitates the offer of IAG services to individuals qualified at level 2 or above.

Our Employer Engagement activity focuses on our Priority Sector areas, offering Skills Health Checks, Company Learning Plans and bespoke learning solutions along with NVQ learning and Essential Skills programmes.

LSC Northamptonshire							
Local Northants EDIMs							
Regional Headline EDIM 1: Improve the Quality and collection of Data		Actual 02/ 03	Actual 03/ 04	Actual 04/ 05	Target 05/ 06	Target 06/ 07	Target 07/ 08
FE	Reduce the overall proportion of 'not known/not provided for ethnic origin to 15% or less by 2008	17%	13%	7%	7%	5%	5%
FE	Reduce the overall proportion of not known/not provided' for disability to 15% or less by 2008	17%	19%	8%	6%	5%	5%
FE	Reduce the overall proportion of not known/not provided' for date of birth to 1% or less by 2008	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%
ACL	Reduce the overall proportion of 'not known/not provided for ethnic origin to 15% or less by 2008	46%	4%	4%	7%	5%	5%
ACL	Reduce the overall proportion of not known/not provided' for disability to 15% or less by 2008	0%	2%	2%	6%	5%	5%
ACL	Reduce the overall proportion of not known/not provided' for date of birth to 1% or less by 2008	3%	6%	4%	1%	0%	0%
Regional Headline EDIM 2: Remove barriers to learning and widen participation for disadvantaged groups							
WBL	Increase participation (AiL)of ethnic minority learners to reflect at least the local census (2000) representation of 4.9%	N/A	3%	3%	4%	5%	5%
WBL	Improve participation (AiL)of learners with learning difficulties and/or disability (LLDD) year on year increase	N/A	15%	16%	17%	18%	20%
WBL	Increase completion rates of ethnic minority in LLSC priority sector areas ( Care, *Construction, Engineering and/or Logistics & distribution) to be on par with other learners.	N/A	N/A	N/A	*45%	*48%	*50%
WBL	Ethnic Minority participation on e2e programme to reflect 10% of the learners on programme each year.	N/A	10%	8%	10%	10%	10%
WBL	Raise the completion rates of ethnic minority in learning to 40%	N/A	N/A	32%	34%	38%	40%
FE	Increase success rates year on year by 2% for LLDD	N/A	72%	73%	75%	77%	77%
FE	Increase success rates year on year by 2% for ethnic minorities	N/A	64%	66%	68%	70%	70%
Regional Headline EDIM 3: Improve Skills for employability for disadvantaged Groups							



<b>Regional Headline EDIM 4: Address gender imbalance on programmes and areas of learning including non traditional occupations</b>							
WBL	Increase participation by females in engineering by 2% ( to reflect local representation or 1-2% above profile)	N/A	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%
WBL	Increase participation by females in construction by 2% ( to reflect local representation or 1-2% above profile)	N/A	0.22%	0.47%	1%	2%	2%
WBL	Increase participation by males in Health and community care by 1% year on year increase ( to reflect local representation or 1-2% above profile)	N/A	6%	5.88%	6.88%	8%	9%
FE	Increase participation by females in engineering and construction to represent local representation or 1-2% above profile)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8%	9%
FE	Reduce achievement gaps between male and female learners overall	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.0%	1%	1%

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